THE Reconstructionist

Vol. XII. November 15, 1946 Heshvan 20, 5707 No. 14

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the Reconstructionist

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EDITORIALS

THE CONVENTION OF THE Z.O.A.

THE Convention of the Zionist Organization of America, held October 25 to 28 in Atlantic City, New Jersey, was not an ordinary convocation. From the quantitative standpoint it represented an amazing outpouring of Zionist manpower. Some 1,600 delegates gathered from all parts of the country. The seriousness of this extraordinary conference, meeting at a time of political uncertainty for Israel and for the whole world, manifested itself in all the sessions.

Conventions of the General Zionists have for years been notorious for their nare of petty intrigue, for cut and dry committee meetings, for prearranged resolutions, for *"ex camera"* gossip, for half-hearted "general debate," and tongue-in-cheek promises to Youth, Zionist education, and so on. Not so the 1946 Convention! There was more devotion to Zionism and to the status of the Yishuv than has ever been witnessed by the most careful observer at a Z.O.A. Convention. While an undercurrent of political jockeying and rumors of bitterness among the leadership were evident (as they always are), these negative aspects of the meeting were merely side issues. You cannot prevent human beings, even if they are Jews, from having private caucuses about principles and personalities on the boardwalk of the "world's largest playground" under an unusually warm autumn sun.

We do not wish to imply that all was perfect at the Convention. Far from it. The microcosm of the Jew still mirrors the macrocosm of the social order. Three features of the conference stand out in bold relief. Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver's presidential report, the genuine desire for information and action on the part of the delegation, and the address of Bartley Crum at the closing banquet session. Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver gave a clear and historical exposition of America's role in all the Anglo-American negotiations bearing on the 100,000 DP's and the present status of Zionism. He analyzed the Administration's statements on the whole Palestine issue. He gave credit where it was due. He was critical, but always on a high level. Dr. Silver was absolutely right in pointing out the defections of American foreign policy, of promises unfulfilled by men high in the administration. He could not do otherwise. President Truman's sincerity was not questioned. Nor was the party in power the target of his justifiable critique. There was little he could add concerning the dark chapter written by Britain and the Colonial office. No kind word can be said for imperial perfidy and cruelty. The

moral stature of the Zionist movement was lifted by Rabbi Silver's challenging plea for justice from our own American Government.

However, we feel that he failed in three respects. In the first place, at a time when groups throughout the country were attempting to make of our rights in Palestine a party issue both in national and local elections, Rabbi Silver had an opportunity to scotch such confused and confusing "political action." He should have cleared the atmosphere for American Zionists, whatever their political persuasion, by warning them against playing into the hands of cynical politicians who are only too ready to use our tragic position as a means to achieve their own selfish "electioneering" goals.

Rabbi Silver also failed to clarify the relation of our aspiration for Palestine to the general world struggle for democracy and against the machinations of the British Colonial Office to enslave Arabs, Jews and all eastern peoples "in the Empire." His silence on these points was a mistake. It was Mr. Bartley Crum, not the Zionist leadership, who, at the last meeting of the convention, pointed out that both parties in America "must share alike the credit or the blame" of our foreign policy in relation to Palestine.

In the third place, Rabbi Silver should have been more explicit regarding the subject of terrorism in Eretz Yisrael. It is not sufficient to repeat that the British Government is "responsible for that terror." It is not enough to say that we must "support the Yishuv in its struggle against the brutal attempts of the Mandatory Government to liquidate the Jewish National Home." And, that by "maximum financial and moral support we must strengthen the Yishuv's power of resistance . . . the Yishuv must, in the last analysis, decide for itself the form and the timing of its resistance to British lawlessness in Palestine. Whatever their decision we will stand by them." These suggestions are not specific.

Rabbi Silver has never been afraid to be concrete and direct on other issues; why not on this? Of course, we must support the Yishuv. But which defense groups shall we support? Is it only Haganah? Of course, Palestinian Jewry understands best the "form and timing" of its resistance." We cannot be unctuous and self-righteous about "forms" of resistance. We are in America. They are in Palestine. They see ships shunted off to Cyprus. They suffer from British brutality. But American Zionists *are* concerned about terrorism which is misdirected and brings nothing but shame and reproach upon the Zionist movement. Zionism in America is not divorced from the struggle for a national home in Palestine. Have we then not the right to make clear to ourselves and to our friends in democratic lands actually what type of resistance we favor?

The crowning event at the convention was the address by Bartley Crum at the convention banquet. Mr. Crum stamped himself as one of the *"Tzadike ummot ha-lam"* by his biting challenge of the secondary level of our State Department, by his denunciation of the Mandatory power, by his warm and understanding approach to Zionism and the problem of Jewish homelessness.

The keynote of the convention from beginning to end was the assertion that Zionism is not an immigration or a refugee movement, but "a movement to rebuild the Jewish State for the Jewish Nation in the land of Israel."

OPEN THE DOORS OF AMERICA

IT is an ironic coincidence that this editorial should chance to be written on the day the press reports the observance of the Sixtieth an-

versary of the Statue of Liberty. Time s made a tragic mockery of Emma Larus's noble words of invitation inscribed the statue's pedestal, though in our day e "huddled masses yearning to breathe ee" are in more desperate straits than er before. The Lady of Liberty still ffts her lamp besides the golden door," tt it is no longer the light of welcome, the door is all but jammed tight. Rent figures underscore that last point. By esidential order, American consular ofials in Europe were instructed some ne ago to make quota visas again avail-le and generally to expedite immigran to America. At the time, it was estiated that the Presidential order would able no less than forty thousand disced persons per year to enter this coun-. The figures now reveal that at the d of the first nine months only 4,000 tually arrived here. The suspicion can-t be downed that consular officials re less than anxious to expedite the migration of displaced persons, indeed, at the Presidential order was neatly d up in official red tape and laid away an inaccessible file.

Was President Truman aware of this uation when he announced a few nths ago that he intended to ask Con-ss for new legislation to liberalize our esent immigration law? Whatever the swer to this question, we need to move th all energy, in collaboration with all eral humanitarian Americans, for the ening of America's doors. Shall we—paraphrase an old cry—sit idle while brethren go forth to war? If the n of the Yishuv can run mortal risks, bring fellow Jews out of the hopelessss of DP camps into Eretz Yisrael, ght we not be equally zealous and reso-e in assuring our fellow Jews and other placed persons a welcome in America? What possible calculations have inited representative Jewish organizations from giving impetus to a movement looking forward to America's accepting a generous share of Europe's homeless? It might be plausibly argued that such agitation will only serve to shift emphasis from the crucial all-important battle for the opening of Palestine's doors. We think quite otherwise.

To begin with, the problem of Jewish homelessness far transcends Palestine's immediate absorptive capacity. The DP camps alone have a population today of close to three hundred and fifty thousand. While the situation of the surviving Jewries of former enemy countries—Germany, Austria, Hungary, etc.—has not received the dramatic treatment that the press has given the Displaced Persons, their plight is hardly less tragic. They, too, face the impossible task of building a new life in an atmosphere sodden with anti-Jewish poison and among people who were complaisant witnesses to the destruction of their closest kin. Almost every surviving Jew in these countries would leave tomorrow if there were any place to go. Again, should America open its doors and thus make a substantial contribution to the solution of the problem, President Truman's plea for the admission of 100,000 to Palestine would receive immeasurable and, perhaps, irresistible weight. In addition, our example might will induce other countries to follow suit.

Liberalization of our immigration laws will not come easily, even if such action carries Presidential endorsement. Whatever the difficulties, they must be faced, for there are no alternatives. Prominent Americans, such as Dean Earl G. Harrison, Fiorello LaGuardia, and others, have already brought this issue to the fore in recent public addresses. It is significant that these men know DP camps from personal observation. We can well expect them and men of their caliber to spearhead the movement.

There are some influential Jews today who show their sympathy for the trapped Jews of Europe by blaming the virtual closing of immigration into Eretz Yisrael on the Zionist demand for a Jewish state. They overlook the fact that the British White Paper of 1939 was issued long before the Biltmore Platform was adopted and that it was the British government not the Zionists who unilaterally rejected the report of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry. If these anti-Zionists are honestly concerned about the welfare of their fellow Jews let them cease sniping at the Zionist movement and take time off for an all-out campaign for the liberalization of our American immigration laws.

Here is a cause on which both Zionists and anti-Zionists, if they are sincere in their solicitude for the welfare of their fellow-Jews abroad, can honestly unite. They should fight boldly and forthrightly for opening the doors of America to those who need to come here. Men of good will, regardless of their nationality or religion will respect Jews who show this concern, and many will offer valuable cooperation.

AN IMPORTANT DECLARATION ON ECONOMIC JUSTICE

SEVERAL weeks ago there was published a statement on economic justice, signed by prominent Catholic, Protestant and Jewish clergymen and lay leaders. The declaration was announced by the Synagogue Council of America, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. This is not the first time that the three major religious groups in the United States have demonstrated wide areas of agreement on some of the basic social issues facing our country. This declaration, like its predecessors, deserves to be widely read, studied and implemented.

The declaration, in brief, consists of eight premises, dealing with the relationship of the moral law to economic life, the degree to which material resources may be appropriated for private use, the moral purpose of economic life, the degree to which the private profit motive should be allowed to operate, the rights and duties of economic associations, the relationship among these associations and between them and government, the role of government in insuring economic justice for all, and the role of the moral law in international economic life. In each case, the effort is made to draw the implications of each premise for our society. In addition, the statement endorses specific modes of conduct; for example, the cooperative movement, minimum wage regulations, removal of all barriers to economic security which are based on prejudice, and organization of functional economic units. We may have our differences of opinion concerning some of the theological foundations of the proposals or the failure of the declaration to be all-inclusive. But no one concerned with making religion an effective force for human good can fail to welcome the degree of agreement which prevails among many leaders of the three faiths.

We fear, however, that this declaration will now be buried as have so many others. There is lacking in the statement any suggestions as to how to implement it among the membership of churches and synagogues. How, for example, is a synagogue or church, composed almost completely of business employers or professionals, to develop an understanding of the spiritual problems of the worker? And even assuming it develops an attitude, how is is supposed to act? The answers to these and other questions will

quire almost a revolution in the organ-
tion of most churches and synagogues,
th in terms of membesrhip and acti-
ies.

While the development of a member-
p heterogeneous in respect to social
d economic status is undoubtedly a
g range project in some communities,
ery church and synagogue can proceed
once to the formation of social justice
mmittees. It should be the purpose of
ese committees to study social issues,
rticularly insofar as religion can throw
ne light on their analysis, and to cre-
an informed membership. This is no
nacea for our social ills, but it will at
st enable statements like the one under
cussion to be received by a more alert
igious community.

EALITIES AND VALUES

WHEN PEOPLE THINK OF THE
ialization of capital they usually think
ner of its seizure by labor or its ex-
priation by government. It rarely oc-
s to anyone that a labor movement
create for itself the capital neces-
y to insure its members the opportun-
for remunerative employment. But
t is precisely what has happened in
tz Yisrael. The Histadrut (Federation
Labor) is possessed of quite a capital.
re are some of the approximate fig-
s for the beginning of 1946:

Economic institutions	LP 6,000,000
Enterprises owned by Histadruth bodies	600,000
Mutual Aid Institutions	800,000
Owned Capital of Labor Settlements	1,800,000
Total	LP 9,200,00

To be sure the Histadrut was able to
efit by such social institutions as the Keren Kayemet and Keren Hayesod and did not have to combat an entrenched capitalist class. Nevertheless the experience of the Yishuv is significant of the possibility of socializing a people's economy without resort to violent class warfare.

▼

THE WORDS OF THE BRITISH National Hymn have been officially changed to purge them of their original bellicose sentiments. The second stanza of the song used to read:

O Lord our God arise,
Scatter our enemies
And make them fall.
Confound their politics;
Frustrate their knavish tricks;
On Thee our hope we fix;
God save us all.

The new version reads:

Nor on this land alone—
But be God's mercies known
From shore to shore.
Lord, make the nations see
That men should brothers be,
And form one family
The wide world o'er.

This is certainly ethically an improvement. It would not be a bad idea if we were to look over some of our own patriotic songs with a view to revision. "The army and navy forever!" is not edifying sentiment for a generation that has no illusions about the glories of war. Armies and navies may still be necessary, as is the police force; but we don't go about singing, "The police force forever!"

▼

IN THE GOVERNMENT OF ANY community, even the most democratic, responsibility for managing its affairs has to be vested in leaders. The aristocratic

principle that authoritative leadership should be vested in the hands of those most competent to discharge its responsibilities is as valid as the democratic principle, that the needs and interests of all must be considered. We have heard much talk, in recent years, about democratizing Jewish communal life, but too little thought has been given to aristocratizing Jewish leadership. We therefore welcome the suggestion—in line with the traditonal Jewish veneration of the *talmid hakham*—which Carl Alpert makes in his column, "I Think As I Please," in the *National Jewish Post* of October 25. He recommends that community councils or similar communal agencies conduct courses to qualify Jews for positions of lay leadership in Jewish communal activities and establish educational qualifications for holding such positions. A realization of the same need suggested the launching of the Reconstructionist Institute for Youth Leadership in which a promising group of young people are preparing, through study and active participation in Jewish communal life, for assuming responsibility in the service of the Jewish community.

▼

La Nouvelle Renaissance, A French weekly founded by the Jewish Resistance Union of France, comments interestingly in its issue of October 11, on the British reaction to President Truman's letter to Prime Minister Attlee. This is a free translation of what it says: "We print elsewhere, for our readers, the full text of this appeal" (Truman's to Attlee) "which only we of the entire English and French press have published in full. Even the famous English boast, 'We can take it,' proclaimed by Churchill in the House of Commons on the morrow of the terrible bombardment of Coventry, could not decide the English press to publish certain passages in which the duplicity of English policy is made particularly evident."

▼

An American Jewish traveler happened to be in the dining room of the Claridge Hotel in Paris when the orchestra started playing Hatikvah. He looked about him to see what distinguished Jewish personality had entered and, not noticing any, he was puzzled to know the occasion for playing Hatikvah. So he called the violinist to his table and asked him. And this was the reply he received: "When the Germans were here, they made me play Horst Wessel. Now, whenever I feel like it, I play Hatikvah."

▼

A correspondent of ours in Los Angeles called our attention to a card he received with these words inscribed on it: "Rabbi ..... announces the opening of a beautifully decorated salon for weddings." As we are not interested in boosting the business venture of the rabbi, we omit his name. His behavior reminds us of the aphorism contained in "Random Thoughts" in our preceding issue: "As long as religion is the trade of the rabbi, trade will be the religion of the laity."

▼

In an article on "trends in Yiddish Education," which appears in the October issue of the *Congress Weekly*, Leibush Lehrer calls attention to the "deprecatory attitude toward Yiddish on the part of most Jewish educators," and adds: "The fact that there is as yet no chair for Yiddish at the Hebrew University at Jerusalem is further evidence of the utter lack of appreciation for the genuine, positive contribution of Yiddish culture toward Jewish life." The lack of a chair in Yiddish language and literature at the Hebrew University is certainly a

(*Continued on Page* 21)

Education in Community Living

By ISAAC LEVITATS

COMMUNITY organization has played a major ble in Jewish survival throughout the ges. The community bonds weakened ith emancipation, but everywhere new mmunal patterns were developed. The stinctive characteristic of the historic ewish community was not primarily its ntralization under the Gaonate, or in pain, or under the Council of Four ands in Poland. The role of these cen- al agencies has been overemphasized ecause a great deal of information is vailable about them. The strength of ewry rested primarily in the local com- unity, the *kehillah*. The closely knit cal institutions provided a milieu for rganized Jewish living and made for reativity of the group and of the indi- iduals within it. These local cells of the ewish body politic served as the main hesive force in Jewish existence. The cal kehillah was further broken down nto societies, *hevrot,* which provided an ntimate atmosphere of fellowship, social ntercourse and — most important — a cale for common cultural self-expression nd advancement. It was in the syna- ogue and in these *hevrot* that the aver- ge Jew found opportunities for group ving, devotion, study, intercession and difying exhortations by preachers and abbis.

Process of Community Organization Reversed in America

In America, community organization tarted in a reverse manner: first de- eloped the national community and only ow the local community is coming into ts own. National organizations like B'nai B'rith, the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, the Zionist Organization, Hadassah and a host of others hold sway over Jewish life. Each local branch takes its orders or instructions from the national office. This stymies the initiative of local groups. From the point of view of opportunities for creativity this is an unfortunate situation. A wholesome balance will be achieved when initiative will stem from the local community and the national organizations will represent federations of these local communities. While retaining most of its present national bodies, American Jewish leadership must make a conscious attempt to reverse the process and to bring back the indigenous form of Jewish communal organization. The local community must come into its own.

First Steps

American Israel is now a long way on the road toward integration of the local community. First came the Federations and Welfare Funds for local, national and overseas philanthropy and social service; then the Jewish Center movement made broad strides toward rallying all Jews of a given city or neighborhood and thus toward engendering community spirit; local civic-protective organizations also found community-wide support; Bureaus of Jewish Education are becoming increasigly wide-spread, cutting across denominational and party lines; and, lastly, community councils are now being established in many cities to serve as the over-all local democratic coordinating agencies.

Only the philanthropic, group work and self-defense organizations have assumed clearly defined contours. The Bureaus and Councils still vary greatly in function and organization in different

cities. All the types of local associations mentioned above, except the Community Councils, have their national organizations: Council of Jewish Federation and Welfare Funds, for philanthropy; Jewish Welfare Board, for group work; Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and a number of the other above-mentioned national organizations, for public relations; and the American Association for Jewish Education, for the Bureaus. The Community Councils alone have as yet no federated body. The Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds usually discharges the functions of such a body.

The organizational structure of American Jewry will be complete when most Jewish settlements have Councils and these Councils are united in a Council of American Jewish Communities. The problem of a truly democratic representative body that can speak with authority for American Jewry will then have been solved.

The Changing Orientation in Jewish Communal Planning

Until recently Jewish thinking on community organization was directed outward—to impress our non-Jewish neighbors. Welfare Funds stressed aid to Jews abroad in order to prove to the world that we take care of our own. There is widespread — and just — dissatisfaction with the refusal of the boards of these organizations to recognize local needs, especially cultural ones in the allocation of their funds. The philosophy animating the Center movement for an entire generation was that of fighting delinquency in order to keep our youth from falling a burden upon the general community; only lately has the orientation partly shifted to an emphasis on a Jewish educational program. The need for self-defense work was overemphasized as against the alternative—or perhaps parallel—need for educating the Jews to face anti-Semitism, since fighting it is properly a non-Jewish enterprise. Education was kept on the periphery of Jewish communal concern and was considered a private matter. And, lastly, many community councils were no more than anti-defamation committees.

In recent years, however, there is evident a growing awareness of the need for a change in orientation. Even in the fight against anti-Semitism there is the realization that the best public relations job begins at home, that the tone of the Jewish community and the actions of its individual members may make for either good or bad relations with our gentile neighbors. The clamor for Welfare Fund support of local, regional and national institutions is growing daily greater. The idea that we cannot concentrate exclusively on helping our poor brethren abroad, while Jewish souls are being lost right here, is gaining more widespread acceptance. It is no mere chance that B'nai B'rith and the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds are devoting more attention at their conventions and in their programs to the dissemination of Jewish culture and education.

Cultural and Social Engineering

It is becoming increasingly evident that planning the future social and cultural pattern of American Jewry requires the guiding hand of professional cultural and social engineers. We live in a changing world. Perhaps never in the lifetime of our people have Jews experienced such changes as those to which our generation is subject—changes from secluded Ghetto life to emancipation, from being foreigners to being Americans, from poverty to riches, from Orthodoxy to Reform, from a *heder* and *melamed* type of education to that offered by modern Hebrew teach-

ss, from lack of social and community fe to a superorganized society and com-unity. These changes leave every one us bewildered. We realize that, in order plan a new and better future for our eople in America and in the world, entral agencies are needed to watch de-elopments and guide them in proper annels.

In a highly complex world of the atom, enicillin, the rocket plane and the ab-ruse formulae of chemistry, mathema-cs and physics, the human institutions annot retain their pristine simplicity. The horse and buggy must give way to much faster and more efficient means of ommunication between humans. All ommunal activities must be coordinated nd guided by experts.

The Scope of Community Coordination

The extent of coordination for com-non action that is possible and desirable n the Jewish community can be exam-ned under four headings:

1. *Councils of membership organiza-ions of like function.* The first step to-ward coordination is the creation of ouncils. These councils represent their onstituent organizations. They may take he form of a Zionist Emergency Council, or political action, a Zionist Youth Com-nission for assisting General Zionist outh, a Culture Council, consisting of he cultural chairmen of organizations, nd many other combinations of active roups for the achievement of a common urpose. The councils, though they might mbrace in their aggregate constituencies majority of the community's groups, till retain the characteristics of member-hip organizations, i.e., they represent nly the combined memberships of the roups, not the entire community. There s at present excessive isolationism in Jew-sh group life; each body acts in ignor-ance of the activities of other bodies. Collaboration usually results in elevation of standards, each group seeking to outdo the best known achievements of its com-petitors.

2. *Congregations.* If little argument is required for the need and possibility of coordinating the activities of organiza-tions serving some special function, few people are as yet convinced of a similar need in our congregational life. Here the sectarian differences and membership rivalries are accentuated. Many years will pass before the community element in congregational activities is recognized. The Synagogue Council of America—on a national scale—which represents all de-nominations, is still, for lack of coopera-tion, eking out a miserable existence. The differences are even sharper on the local scene. However, it is possible to establish a local Synagogue Council, by making it a purely lay organization, consisting of several officers of each congregation. Such a Council can take charge of *kashrut,* which at present cuts across de-nominational lines, plan community reli-gious services, make a common appeal for synagogue affiliation (there are enough unaffiliated Jews for all to share, and more), discuss common problems, adopt rules on minimum standards for Bar Mitzvah and confirmation and gen-erally seek to strengthen the religious bonds of individual Jews with their peo-ple. Some even advocate community sup-port for rabbis and other synagogue func-tionaries.

3. *Youth Groups.* The Jewish Com-munity Center usually serves as the ser-vice and coordinating agency for the lei-sure time activities of our youth. In ad-dition, or within the jursdiction of the Center, it has already become customary to have councils of various clubs. Youth councils generally are not difficult to or-ganize.

4. *Schools.* Wherever there are Bureaus of Jewish Education they usually bring together the various schools for common action. Stereotyped steps have already been worked out in the achievement of such coordination. It is advisable, however, to have councils of schools even where there are no Bureaus; within Bureaus, too, their existence is helpful.

Not every community must necessarily follow the same pattern. Each locality must serve its own needs, as it sees best. The primary objective, however, must be the development of a sense of community responsibility and oneness.

It will be asserted that this might result in over-organization in a society that is already super-organized, with overlapping limited memberships. This can be countered by the statement that proper organization is the price we must pay for democracy. On the other hand, joint deliberation and comparison of functions will gradually result in the elimination of superfluous organizations.

The community will thus consist of membership groups, organized in councils, and of communal functional agencies, created by these organizations. The communal agencies in existence were mentioned above: Federations, Welfare Funds, Centers, community relations groups, Bureaus and Community Councils. While the membership groups, consisting of adult organizations, congregations, clubs and school boards, seek primarily the advancement of their limited clientele, the communal agencies represent them all and act functionally in their limited sphere—Bureaus in education, Centers in group work, etc.—and in addition serve in a coordinating capacity. The communal agencies seek the welfare of the entire community, including also the unaffiliated. Large new segements of the population can thus be reached.

Whose Shall Be the Initiative in Community Organization?

The purpose of all this organizational activity is to create within the community an atmosphere of cultural and social consciousness that would make each community largely independent and, hence, creative. Such a goal can be achieved only if the organizational structure is truly democratic. Once the people will rule—not the few moneyed persons as is mostly the case at present—there will also come about an intensification of folk life and common action in the direction of the grass roots of our folk existence: religion, Zionism, culture. Diversity will be fortified by unity; a new integrated civilization will emerge.

Who will do it? Which organization is equipped to undertake this vast task of reorganization? Rightly this is the sphere of the community councils. Unfortunately, however, these councils are still dominated by the philosophy of outward orientation, of philanthropy and anti-defamation. The Centers are not equipped to do it because the Jewish zeal and profound thinking of the top leaders in the Jewish Welfare Board have not yet percolated to the executives of these institutions, who generally lack a good Jewish background.

In the interim, the Bureaus of Jewish Education should consciously aim at this goal. The Bureaus are usually the agencies that are closest to the most cherished ideals of our people; their approach to the problem is most intensively Jewish. While they seek to bring the schools up to high standards of achievement, they can simultaneously endeavor to raise the organizational and cultural level of the community in order to prepare it to receive the graduates of an advanced school system. The Bureaus should, therefore, act as the agents to bring more Jewish content into group work, to raise

agregational standards, to foster cul-al activities, and thus generally to ele-e the entire community.

educating the Jewish Public

The Jewish public will have to under-a long process of re-education to the v ideas of community, life. There are laymen—indeed, even few profession-—who have clear notions on the or-izational desiderata in Jewish life. ose who possess the required knowl-e and skill must dedicate themselves this sacred task on the American e. Professionals must furnish coura-geous and wise leadership—must fight for their ideas. That the community is receptive and is prepared to lend a helping hand is evident wherever honest and far-sighted leadership is available. There is nothing more fascinating to the lay leaders than to bring order into the chaos of Jewish life. The non-Jewish community is also gradually—though more slowly—setting out to put its house in order by establishing community councils, councils of social agencies and other community-wide organizations. American Israel is perhaps destined to lead the way.

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ne British Are Not Nazis—A Reply to Mr. Duker

By IRA EISENSTEIN

The article to which Dr. Eisenstein's critique is directed appeared in the preceding ue of The Reconstructionist *under the title, "A War to Annihilate the Jews—The cond Phase." We stated in a footnote that we published it as a challenging statement rthy of earnest consideration though we did not necessarily agree with all the views it pressed. We accordingly welcome the expression of equally earnest views which oppose r. Duker's conclusions. The article below is one such expression of opinion. In our next ue we intend to publish another by Jacob B. Agus. We believe that only good can come m this public airing of a crucial issue affecting the life of our people.*

—Editors.

IN submitting his article, "A War to Annihilate the Jews The Second Phase," Mr. Duker exer-d his right to free self-expression. I v take advantage of the equal right to icize and to comment upon Mr. Du-s provocative and most interesting er.

do so not because I question for one ment Mr. Duker's good faith or integ-, nor is it because I have not the nest regard for his erudition. But I eve that he commits a fundamental r, the error of assuming that the Brit-are basically Nazis, and that in the ent international situation, particular-with regard to Palestine, the British ple and government will act toward Jews as the Nazis acted, when faced with a challenge to their self-interest. This assumption leads Mr. Duker to build a pyramid of possibilities, each in turn more horrible than the preceding, culminating in the great climactic likelihood that the British will seek to annihilate the Jewish people.

It is, actually, a sort of inverted pyramid starting from one narrow hypothesis and building up to broader and more menacing implications. "The blockade against the Jewish immigrants to the Holy Land has started a chain of reactions which is bound to lead to hostile steps against the Jewish people in all parts of the world." This is Mr. Duker's fundamental thesis. Beginning from there he is driven to assume that the British must assault the Jewish people in Europe.

They will be compelled to resort to attempting to "starve the Jews" in the concentration camps. To justify each succeeding step, they will be driven to smear the Jewish DP's as Bolsheviks, and to subsidize fascist murderers in many countries. Bevin's remark about the Jews in New York is built up to become the ugly precursor of a black anti-Semitic movement. Having made anti-Semites of the British, Mr. Duker then quite "logically" proceeds to point out that a British anti-Semite is not necessarily different from another kind, and so he would not be more likely to stop short of a complete job "than the Nazis stopped at the extermination of the East European Jews." Before you know it, the British army is practicing in Palestine the technique by means of which it will hold down revolts in the home country itself. Liverpool and Glasgow are already in flames in Mr. Duker's imagination.

The British propagandists are now consulting *Mein Kampf* to use it "as their Bible." By the end of the article Mr. Duker has already convinced himself that it was British policy "which has led to the annihilation of over six million Jews in Europe," and he hysterically appeals to all decent people to "stop the British government from casting Western civilization into the abyss."

Mr. Duker is profoundly concerned over the welfare of the Jewish people. No one can doubt that he is more than disturbed by the current policy of the British government. But Mr. Duker unfortunately seems to imply, that unless one is prepared to place the British government and the British people in the same class with the Nazis, one's concern for Jewry is not commensurate with its needs. Mr. Duker seems to imply that one is fatally careless if one does not see the "parallel" between what is happening today and what happened during the 30's in Central Europe.

The difference between us, I say, is a difference in assumptions. I do not believe that the British government or the English people is Nazi. I do not believe that its philosophy, expressed or implied, calls for extermination of the Jewish people or calls for the repudiation of ethical religion. There is nothing in the party platform or in the record to lead one to believe that we are here faced with a threat in any way comparable to that which we faced from Germany.

That we are disillusioned and disappointed, that we are indignant at the way the Palestine problem has been handled by the Labor Party, and the present British government, goes without saying. But it seems to me that Great Britain's muddling of this problem is in the same class rather with the ineptitude of our own American administration. It is short-sighted; it is governed by expediency and opportunistic; but it is not deliberately malicious.

Just the other day, the British removed one of their very high military officials because of anti-Semitc remarks This was done at the very moment when the prestige of the military in Palestine was paramount in British policy. This does not seem to be the way a Nazi mentality might work. Several hundred people who have been detained in concentration camps were released, and, according to dispatches from Jerusalem they did not suffer in these camps in any way comparable to what they would have suffered at the hands of people who were really Nazis. No one questions that there are anti-Semites among British officials in Palestine and in London; that there are some among military officers, and in the rank and file of the armies. Certainly. But it is a far cry from harboring a certain number of anti-Semites to co

ting a plot to destroy our people. e accusations made by Mr. Duker are iniscent of similar accusations made other people against us, with as little dence to back them up.

The British are no angels but neither are they devils. However, even if they were, the old adage would still apply to them, *Al tiftah peh le-satan.*" ("Do not give Satan an occasion to accuse.")

The Caretaker*

By THERESA KOHN

He won't leave.
He stays on
After everything is closed up
And locked and barred,
And the last vacationist leaves.
The man believes he saw God here—
Stays on right through the bitter cold—
Got religion.
He's harmless though
And good as gold.

Saw God?
And did he dream
Of thunder and lightning
and a mountain in flame
and a Voice?

Or did he see Him in the full moon
framed by those tall pines,
Or in the splash of color
as the sun dips between the ridges
and sinks into the lake?
Did he see Him from that place we call The Rock,
On which we sat and viewed infinity? . . .

Or in a bush that burned with fire
and was not consumed?

Did he meet Him on the road we took at night
suddenly—as he turned the bend—
and find Him all but hidden in the dark—
Hear the silence broken by the murmur through the trees,
a breathless whispering . . . a breeze. . . .

A still small voice?

Or in the calm of evening on the lake

* It will interest our readers to know that this poem is written about a real person, ne caretaker of a summer camp in the Adirondack Mountains.

did he behold God's spirit
silent, still, upon the waters?
Or did God loom before him in a storm
and with the voice of a thousand shattering voices
fell him to the ground,
and did he listen prostrate, bowed. . . .

To the sound of a shofar call
exceeding loud?

The man has seen what he has seen
And heard what he has heard—
And who are we to contradict his word,
Admonish him that God is everywhere we seek him
When he need not even seek, to find Him here?

Random Thoughts

IF history had merely repeated itself, we should never have had history.

It is change that makes history, and the more violent the change, the more significant the history.

If we study the past for the sake of finding analogies for the present, we end up with a wrong notion of the past and with misleading ideas about the present.

Why then study history? For the same reason that we study geography. Geography helps us to find our bearings in place, and history helps us to find our bearings in time.

A Jew who does not know the history of his people is a disoriented human being.

▼

If faith does not always create its object, fear certainly does. ("History teaches that the fear of war is in itself a cause of war.")

▼

The nations are like blinded mules that circle round fixed poles to the rhythm of war, inflation, depression, war, inflation, depression.

▼

It is amazing to what varying periods of history our contemporaries belong. Bilbo belongs to pre-historic times and Einstein to post-historic times. Surprisingly few contemporaries are contemporaneous.

▼

Page the Jewish Welfare Board!

"It (the United States) took the position . . . that a national home for the Jewish people should be established in Palestine." (From Pres. Truman's letter to King Ibn Saud, N. Y. *Times,* Oct. 29, 1946).

Maybe now *Hatikvah* will be sung at subsequent public dinners of the J.W.B.

A national home in Palestine happens to be indispensable to "*Jewish* Welfare."

▼

A good way of finding out what is meant by religious experience is to try the procedure suggested by the following definition which we have come across of experience in general:

"Experience is, first of all, doing some

g; second, doing something that makes ifference; third, knowing what difnce it makes."

ry to meet these three requirements n the affirmation of God's unity, or n the observance of the Sabbath, and will know what it means to have gious experience.

▼

We short-circuit religion, when we treat urely as an affair between the individ- and God. To function normally, the gious current connecting the individu- with God must pass through the life of eople.

▼

n the arsenal of theological antiitism, a favorite stick to beat the Jews n is that they are given to legalistic tifogging in their religion.

The truth is that legalistic pettifogging religion is a universal trait. All relins at a certain stage of their develop- nt show that weakness, or as some be- e, that strength.

Here is a sample of Christian legalism: "Of Human Bondage," there is a ne in the country vicarage in which ry Ann put little Philip on the big ily Bible, so that he could reach the le.

His aunt noticing this, cried out, "Oh, liam, he can't sit on the Bible."

His uncle solved the difficulty by inposing the prayer book, between lip's small breeches and the Bible.

In traditional Jewish practice, no meat o be eaten during the first nine days the month of Ab, except on the Sabh. Some who cannot get along without at get around the prohibition by eating chicken.

That is no funnier than the old Christh practice of eating pretzels on fast vs because they were supposed to afd less nourishment than ordinary ad.

How many people are there who really have a part in their own lives?

▼

Altogether too much preaching is the art of circumlocution applied to religion.

▼

If the wisdom of outstanding persons had not been overrated, the ordinary person might have exercised the initiative to achieve some wisdom on his own account.

▼

An old saying has it that they who know one language only do not even know that language. Apply this to civilizations. They who live in one civilization only can neither know nor live that civilization in all its depth and breadth.

The history of India's leaders is a history of their discovery of India through the medium of Western civilization.

A Hindu critic of Nehru's recent book, "The Discovery of India," remarked that "like many of his outstanding compatriots, Nehru discovered India while he was a student in England."

It would be well for us Jews to recognize that some of the outstanding interpreters of Judaism likewise discovered Judaism through their studies of the philosophies and cultures of the Western world. This is true of Maimonides, of Schechter and of Ahad Ha-am.

On the other hand, it would be interesting to know how much of Western civilization has actually been discovered, and still remains to be explored, through the medium of Judaism.

Cross fertilization is a well-known phenomenon in all cultures. But deliberate cross-plantation is a far more spiritual process and creative of far more significant results.

▼

A layman identified with the newly rising sect in Judaism known as the "non-

observant Orthodox" was seen leaving a non-kosher resaturant on Passover.

He was asked: "How come?"

"Don't I give to "*Mo-os hittim*"? (the contribution of matzos for the poor).

▼

Formerly Jews would hire a "shabbos goy" to turn out the lights and make fire in the stove on the Sabbaths.

Now many congregations hire a rabbi to be their "shabbos Jew," to keep the Sabbath for them.

▼

A Jewish periodical recently quoted a story by Dr. Joseph Sizoo about the Toonerville Trolley.

"It was proceeding at its usual pace. The irate passenger asked, 'Can't you go faster?'

"The skipper replied, 'Sure I can. But I like to stay with my trolley.' "

"The rabbi or minister," Dr. Sizoo was further quoted as saying, "will lose all influence, unless he is staying with his people. If you're too far head you do nothing for them and hurt yourself."

I suspect that too many of our rabbis and educators are interested in staying with the snail-like trolley. That is probably why so many of our people have come to use other means of travel.

M. M. K.

Book Notes

RALPH BARTON PERRY'S SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

PURITANISM AND DEMOCRACY, by Ralph Barton Perry, The Vanguard Press, New York, 1944, xvi + 688 pp.

ONE WORLD IN THE MAKING, by Ralph Barton Perry, Current Books, Inc., New York, 1945, 275 pp.

THE revolutions of our time have profoundly unsettled the naive faith of Americans in the American democratic way of life. Some have beat an easy retreat into the authoritarian obscurantisms of left wing or of right wing Hegelianism; others have taken the path to authoritarianism or obscurantism in religion. Many have publicly maintained the forms of democracy while privately denying faith in the realities of the democratic spirit which should inform their practice. In brief, our age is marked by cynicism and despair about the democracy under which we live.

No truly thoughtful person can take any of the easy courses which have been suggested. There is a compulsion which arises from his very soul to examine the democratic heritage and to find whether, in truth, it does provide a living faith for our times, whether by revision or by reinterpretation it can be used to meet the problems and overcome the stresses of the contemporary world. The heroes of the democratic tradition have been studied of recent times as never before—witness the outcome of the Jefferson bicentennial three years ago, and such studies as those of C. M. Wiltse on Calhoun and A. M. Schlesinger, Jr., on Jackson. Even the martyrs of our tradition have received attention; Thomas Paine has been re-studied and his works re-edited; Woodrow Wilson has been the subject of several recent books. Groups of thoughtful men and women have come together—in the Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion, and in the Conference on the Scientific Spirit and the

mocratic Faith, to name two promi-
t New York groups — to carry out
r evaluations of democracy coopera-
lly, bringing to bear on each aspect
the problem the techniques and the
lts of their special disciplines.
Within this general framework of seek-
many men of differing religious
kgrounds have attempted to capture
their own historic faiths a special
tion to the democratic faith. So Louis
kelstein, in *The Pharisees* tried to
e democracy a Jewish tradition, while
ques Maritain, in his brief but danger-
Christianity and Democracy tried
take possession of democracy in the
ne of the Roman Catholic church. A
d important essay of the same nature
alph Barton Perry's recent *Puritanism*
Democracy, which is in one aspect
ignified, scholarly, and thoughtful at-
pt to bring the Protestant Christianity
the New England settlers into a close
oric and doctrinal relationship with
nocracy. For the attempts of both
ry and Finkelstein, as opposed to that
Maritain, there is this much to say:
r theses can be supported by historical
lence, if the material is carefully
cted. Even this is denied to Maritain.
erry is not satisfied merely to present
thesis but goes further to the work-
out of a social philosophy which
ht have stood by itself, independent
the historic rationale which he at-
pts to provide. It is worthwhile to ex-
ine this social philosophy as one of the
attempts in our day to provide an
llectual formulation for a conserva-
liberalism, distinct from both revolu-
and reaction, a "discriminating and
ward-looking fidelity" to a past "per-
ually rediscovered and renewed." It is
d faith in neither old gods nor new
nces; it is a combination of reverence
l skepticism toward both, with a clear
se of moral direction. Most of the time, when Perry talks of puritanism or of democracy, he is talking not of historic movements but of this moral attitude as expressed religiously or politically. Thus he is enabled to speak of men who were in no sense Puritans as puritans; men who were not Democrats as democrats. He is talking of "puritanism and democracy" and by using capital letters for these two attitudes, creates the impression that he is talking about the dominant strains in American thinking in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. To put it another way, he sees both puritanism and democracy as in his view they should have been rather than as they actually were.

Mr. Perry's "puritanism" arises from man's feeling that there is a best to which he must aspire; whenever he falls short of his aspiration, he feels a sense of guilt. "Every man, sooner or later, feels himself rightly exiled from paradise and looks for a return. Puritanism is the elaboration of this theme, and the inculcation of its stern implications: some things are better than other things, and the discovery of the best is of paramount importance; the order of better and worse does not coincide with the natural order of strength among human motives, and if a man is to cleave to the best he must therefore overcome the second-best, until its subordination shall have become his second nature; the best prescribes rules of action, to be scrupulously observed; judged by the standard of the best, human life is a record of tragic and ignominious failure, and the recognition of this failure is the condition of its redemption; to live well requires the forging of a will which is stronger than any natural appetite; the reorganization of the natural individual under the authority of his moral faculties constitutes personality, which is the essence of man as distinguished from his fellow animals; society,

in proportion as it is human, is an association of persons in which mutual respect is mingled with solicitude and a sense of common responsibility; there is hope of salvation both for the person and for mankind, and indomitable perseverance in the moral struggle alone gives cosmic dignity to the human race" (pp. 627-28). Democracy, too, is a moral movement, optimistic where puritanism is pessmistic, seeing not "man's present predicament" but "his hopes and possibilities." It is the belief that, if human nature is permitted to develop in freedom, man will cooperate intelligently with his fellow-man to build a better world.

Naturally, the extremism of both of these "historic" movements of what Mr. Perry calls "moral liberalism," has produced exaggeration of defects. In the case of puritanism, the defect was excessive preoccupation with the letter rather than the spirit of morality, and "through preoccupation with the moral law, a neglect of those aspects which nature and the universe present to the senses, the affections, and the reason" (p. 628). Democracy has suffered because of its overoptimistic view of human nature and its confusion of public good and self-interest. It has also exaggerated the influence of reason and goodness in the world and has therefore failed to build a moral armament against disillusion.

Now if we assume that there is an ideal of puritanism of which historic Puritanism was the shadowy expression, and an ideal of democracy to which historic Democracy (in America) is the approximation, it will be seen that these two moral movements are both complementary and mutually corrective. To these two movements Perry proposes to apply his critical conservatism, to "take puritanism and democracy as symbols of piety, reaffirming that which we find true; looking for their constituents of truth in order that we may reaffirm them, reaffirming them in order thereby to maintain our moral identity and the stream of the national life" (p. 631). In short, Perry's conservatism is a demand for a reconstitution of American thinking on the basis of lasting elements in seventeenth century religious pessimism and eighteenth century political optimism wedded together into a positive creed of inclusiveness, of non-conflict.

Here is one point where puritanism must yield to democracy: it is democratic to believe that no knowledge is certain enough to be imposed by force, nor can this central tenet of democracy be claimed by any religious tradition. To the extent that diversity (of religious as well as of political belief) is to be welcomed, secularization has entered into Mr. Perry's Eden. The concerns of eternity which are the concerns of religion have to be subordinated to the concerns of temporality. Especially if the diversity is itself the product of an extreme but not an anti-social moral individualism, in which the reason and conscience of the individual are supreme over any doctrine, creed, or constitution. "The fundamental faith of democracy is the belief that sound institutions are founded on truth; that truth is accessible to all men through the cultivation and exercise of their higher faculties; that truth will in the end unite men rather than divide them; and that to this end men should be permitted freely to think, profess, discuss, and persuade" (p. 437). Yet Mr. Perry professes to find this moral individualism rooted deeply in the Christian tradition—even in the Catholic tradition. Not without reason did President Taylor of Sarah Lawrence College, one of the sharpest critics of Perry's work, title his criticism "Puritanism *or* Democracy."

t is, however, only just to say again t Perry does not mean Puritanism, or ristianity, or Democracy in the usual se when he uses these terms, but ra- r what in his private reflections he come to associate with these terms. d it is only just to measure a social llosophy by its stand on such a con- porary issue as international coopera- n for world peace. Here Mr. Perry's ial thought emerges into the concrete, a believer in the "One World in Making." This specific application Perry's general attitude is dedicated the memory of Wendell Willkie, and s originally presented as a series of tures before the Lowell Institute in ton. It is Mr. Perry's thesis in this rk that the world is already a techno- ical unity, but has yet to become a ral and social, that is an institutional, ty. This moral unity is what we are ay attempting to forge. Here Perry erts that, as the basis of any lasting ce, "that which has to be built is a tem of institutions which shall not y embrace the whole surface of the th but also represent every human in- st" (p. 55). Before this can be done, world-wide conscience must be devel- d; this will underlie the political, al, cultural, educational, and religious achievements "which in their sum will constitute that moral unity of man's world for which the unity of his dwelling place has paved the way" (p. 6). Politically, Mr. Perry sees true world government as the ultimate development, but the approach must be gradual through cooperation by existing national governments in limited areas. The fuller development of political world unity is conditioned on the development and enforcement of an international law, on the development of a world economy of abundance, freedom, and justice, on the recognition of both cultural diversity and the growing areas of cultural universality, e.g., in science, on the reorientation of education on global lines, and, finally, it must be aided and augmented by a religion of humanity supplementing the various historic religions and sanctifying the ideal of a morally unified mankind.

A Christian social philosophy which can see beyond Christianity, an American social philosophy which can envision one world, a conservative social philosophy which is retrospective, but not retrogressive — this is what Perry has given us. It is good that these works have been written.

JOSEPH L. BLAU

REALITIES ANG VALUES

(*Continued from Page* 8)

fect that should be made good as soon possible. One can understand a certain uctance to recognize the Yiddish lan- age at a time when there might have n grave danger of its supplanting He- w as the vernacular in Eretz Yisrael. at danger, however, seems long past and it is hard to see how a Hebrew University, whose function it should be to preserve and hand down all the cultural treasures of our people, can long overlook the vast area of Jewish spiritual creativity which has availed itself of Yiddish as its medium of expression.

Music Notes

By JUDITH K. EISENSTEIN

THE kevutzah in the north of Palestine called Yagur achieved some months ago a fame it did not seek. We all read in our newspapers how it was raided by British soldiers in search of hidden arms, and how the yield of many years of hard labor was left in ruins by the raiders. We read of beatings. We read of the arrests of young men who only a very short while before had been comrades-in-arms to those very British soldiers. This "publicity break" was the last thing in the world that the *haverim* of Yagur would have wanted. Even the fact that their colony was an important outpost of Jewish self-defense was never bruited abroad. The *haverim* had other sources of pride, and those they would rejoice to share with us.

I will not speak here of their years of struggle, of their agricultural achievements, nor even of their sturdy adherence to the great principles of collective living. Yagur has a treasure of which it is proud, and that is the presence in its midst of the *haver,* Yehudah Shertok. To Zionists in this country the name Shertok is apt to call up the picture of the brilliant and charming Moshe Shertok, head of the political department of the Jewish Agency. Of his brother we know less, and we do not even realize, for the most part, when we hear or sing the ever popular song *Kinneret,* that the melody was made by Yehudah of *Kevutzat Yagur.* Yehudah Shertok is one of the new singers of Zion, whose music is the seed of the Jewish music of the future.

The two Shertoks were brought to Palestine as young children. They know the land more intimately perhaps than many a native-born Palestinian. An idealistic father felt impelled to live for some years away from the Jewish community and right in the heart of an Arab village. There the boys learned not only to speak a fluent and incredibly natural Arabic but to know the inner workings of the Arab mind. But their general education was never neglected, and Yehudah attended the university in Istanbul as a youth.

About twenty-five years ago, Yehudah settled in Yagur as a worker. He has remained a worker. He took part in the most gruelling tasks during the day, and at night he worked at his music. With stiff and calloused hands he would practice the violin, his eyes sometimes closed in half sleep. He composed while his fellows slept,—and he taught, in every free hour. It is only in very recent years that he has released himself from the duty of *avodah,* to some extent, so that he may work in the children's school during the day.

Shertok has been in constant search of the heart of his people. He probes it and tries to expose it in music. His is not a gay and casual pouring forth of easy melody. To his search he brings a profound scholarship. His Hebrew is not the everyday patter of the ordinary Palestinian. It is a rich heritage of language and literature, with infinite associations philosophical and emotional. The poet Rachel finds her most exact musical interpretation in the melodies of Shertok. Perhaps it is unfortunate that the best known of these is the "Kinnereth," which is the only Shertok song that relapses into

banal. In other Rachel songs, and ed in most of his music, we find the nnings of a melodic line which is uely the outgrowth of the modern rew language. Shertok has done, in ody line alone, what Moussorgsky did the Russian, and Debussy for the ch language. He has taken the exact hm of the Hebrew, its odd syncopa-s, its irregular pauses, and he has n the inflection as it has developed Palestinian speech, and exaggerated n into melody. This is contributing ne creation of that idiom which is the seed of the new Jewish music.

ut Shertok has done more. He has the foundation in Palestine for a musical form. This is the exact equi-nt of the new form which is appear-so frequently in American music. our own young composers, he finds tisfactory medium in the large com-tion which combines the spoken word choral and instrumental music. Our posers base their music on poems of t Whitman, on speeches of Abraham oln, on the earthy talk of the G.I. tok takes Bialik: "Rise, oh ye lost in wild! Rise and leave the waste and lation!" He takes the story of Ne-iah. "Come, let us build the walls of salem!," "The laborers were armed, of them worked with one hand, held a weapon in the other." He s the call to freedom out of the Pas-r Haggadah. He builds up full length positions, with stirring speech and al music. He composes for a special val, and he composes, (as our Ameri-men did during the war) to buiild ale for a people at war.

is choral sections are simple, but they solid, hewn out of stern rock. They to be simple. They are performed is *haverim,* workers of Yagur. After day's hard work is over, they sit down Yehudah to rehearse. He studies the text with them, helping them to sense every shade of meaning in the words. He teaches them their parts, by rote. And he conducts them, when they present their work to their friends and neighbors in other *kevutzot.*

But the children will not be so hard to teach. They study music in their school, with Shertok. They know how to sing at sight. Some of them have learned to play instruments. Many have already learned to sing some of the most difficult choral compositions by Palestrina, Di Lassus, Buxtehude, Bach. Out of the youth of Yagur, Shertok has already produced one orchestral conductor. And now, after the long isolation of the war years, even while the *haverim* are busy repairing their damaged buildings and crops, Yehudah Shertok wants to repair the breaches in the musical heritage, which is due his boys and girls. He wants them to know the great compositions of the outside world. He wants them to know the history of music, and the development of its forms. Then, out of a soil, and a language, and a musical idiom, with the skills of performance and composition, and on the foundation of a long musical tradition, there can grow the Jewish music which will have universal meaning.

A *haver* of Yagur is leaving America for home, some time this month. We could send with him a gift to Yehudah Shertok and the boys and girls of Yagur, the gift of a library of recordings which will bring them great music of various forms, in its full development. Some of us have already started to collect this library. We view it as a small token of gratitude for the immeasurable gift we have received from them,—the example of courage in Jewish living, and the joy in Jewish living that comes to us in their songs. I call on you who have partaken, and are yet to partake, to join us in sending the token.

CORRESPONDENCE

Comment on Rabbi Rosenberg's "Sacred and Secular—Their Place in the Jewish Community"

Sirs:

I have read and have reread Rabbi Stuart E. Rosenberg's article entitled "Sacred and Secular—Their Place in the Jewish Community" published in the June 28 issue. I find that the author is genuinely interested in the development of communal democracy and better community organization. But I also find that his treatment of the problem in the small Jewish community is unrealistic and dangerous.

I do not know how many synagogue centers there are in the United States. I would guess not too many. I think that most small communities have synagogues with their social halls and class rooms used as meeting places for the community. In most of these small communities there are no Jewish Community Centers or YMHA buidings, but in an ever increasing number there are Community Councils or Federations and Welfare Funds which carry on the community services (fund drives, community organization, coordination, community relations, family services, recreation and Jewish education) for the entire community.

Rabbi Rosenberg argues that the rabbi in the small Jewish community should also become the "executive director" of the Center as well as take over the "other valid areas of Jewish interest." And he wants the rabbis to be "trained for this kind of specialized work."

I agree that the rabbi should be helped to understand and accept the total community idea and should be an eager contributor to that idea and reality in his community. But I should like to ask Rabbi Rosenberg whether the very "communal democracy" that he so zealously desires will be enhanced by promoting the idea of the "synagogue center with the rabbi as the executive director?" Which synagogue and which rabbi in the small community will be the so-called "synagogue center?" Is not the central community organization idea carried out democratically growing in American Jewish life precisely because it is not part of any synagogue and is therefore able to draw upon and serve the whole community? Considering honestly and realistically our present community divisions will Rabbi Rosenberg's idea of synagogue center actually help or only hinder the present growth of community-wide services which only a representative community organization can and does offer?

Serving as I do at present a small Jewish community, I know well the multiplicity of services involved in a local Jewish community council setup, which offers a wide program in the field of community work. It requires years of special training and experience to carry out these services on a high professional plane. If Rabbi Rosenberg really knows well what this varied community service program involves, does he honestly think that a rabbi is in a position to do justice to it? Should not the rabbi, to be just to himself, be a rabbi first and a contributing lay community leader second? As a community leader the rabbi can help in the development of that communal democracy and program which Rabbi Rosenberg talks about.

Rabbi Rosenberg and *The Reconstructionist* should be assured that the Jewish social worker, seeing as he does realistically his whole community, is very eager to have the contribution and the leadership and yes, hard work, of all who believe and have faith in the Jewish community. We are only at the beginning of building a community structure in America which requires sympathetic and kind nurture now if it is to have promise for the future. The rabbi has a tremendous responsibility to this community development and he is welcomed with open arms. The fact is that it is not the community worker or the central community agency alone which takes the credit for the growth of healthy community life. All leaders, all organizations are making their contributions and they should all be recognized and respected for it.

But Rabbi Rosenberg is suspicious of present day Jewish social workers. They are secular, they relegate the religious interests to a minor role, they promote the assimilationist idea, and so forth. The whole idea, I am afraid, is a reflection of some of the rabbinical thinking that only creates mistrust in our community life and does much harm to the building of community vision and work.

The Jewish social worker does not want to give the synagogue a "back seat." On the contrary, the profession of Jewish social work is devoted to the building of the American Jewish community on a sound basis and the synagogues are an important part of that communal structure. The synagogue and the rabbi are used and called upon to be the leader and the inspiration of many community programs. Neither the rabbi nor the Jewish communal worker can do the community job alone. Each has his distinct and distinguished service to offer to the community. To ask the rabbi to secularize his own profession by carrying an additional load of community organization work is a disservice to him and his community. It will not help, I am afraid, in the development of that healthy community structure and program which all of us desire.

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